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The PALIMPSEST

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The PALIMPSEST

Adrian D. Anderson, Executive Director

VOLUME 63 NUMBER 5 SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1982

William Silag, Editor

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Cover: *Bruce Clark, representing Students for a Democratic Society, presents a petition to Iowa Governor Harold Hughes in Iowa City, May 1, 1968. This issue of* The Palimpsest, *which focuses on political issues and social activities of special interest to Iowa students in the decades following World War II, was prepared by Kathryn Helene with the assistance of Alan M. Schroder. (David Luck photo, SHSI)*

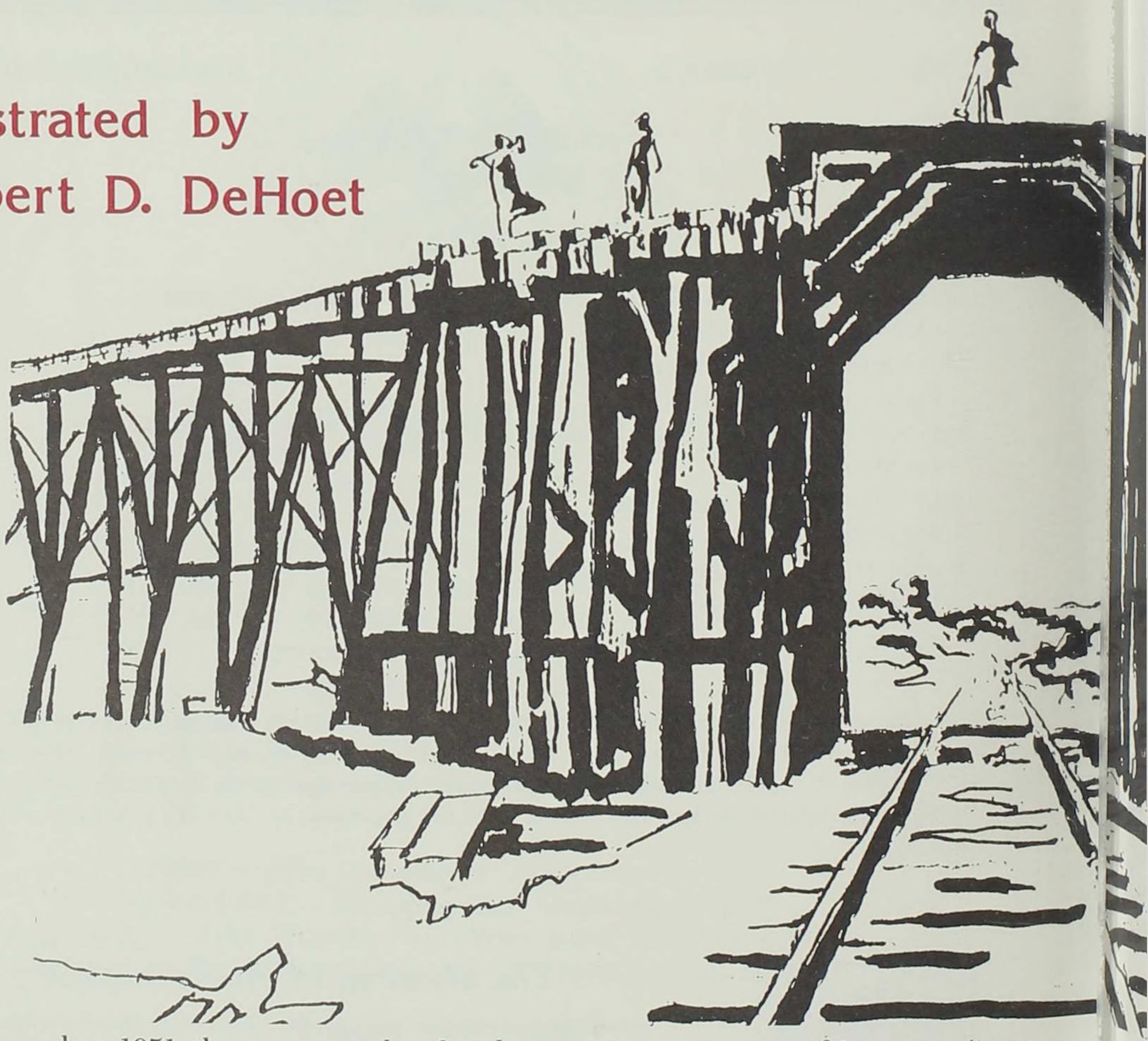
The Meaning of the Palimpsest

In early times a palimpsest was a parchment or other material from which one or more writings had been erased to give room for later records. But the erasures were not always complete, and so it became the fascinating task of scholars not only to translate the later records but also to reconstruct the original writings by deciphering the dim fragments of letters partly erased and partly covered by subsequent texts.

The history of Iowa may be likened to a palimpsest which holds the record of successive generations. To decipher these records of the past, reconstruct them, and tell the stories which they contain is the task of those who write history.

Blacks and Whites i
An Iowa Town

Illustrated by Robert D. DeHoet



In November 1951 the townspeople of Manly, Iowa reacted with disbelief and anger when they received the news that a black student from Manly had been denied admission to a University of Iowa sorority on the basis of her race. Grace Marken, the president of Phi Gamma Nu and a Manly native herself, had recommended that the student, Gwen Moore, be accepted into the sorority. When her sorority sisters voted unanimously

in Manly: Overcomes Racism

By William J. Maddix

to deny membership to Moore, Marken resigned in protest, telling the press that she could not belong to a racist organization. "After all," she said, "I have to live with myself."

Marken's action sparked controversy in Manly and elsewhere. Several civic and campus groups urged University President Virgil Hancher to override the sorority's decision, but he refused. "The University," he argued, "guards the constitutional right of individuals and groups to free association." Hancher's ruling ended the immediate dispute, but

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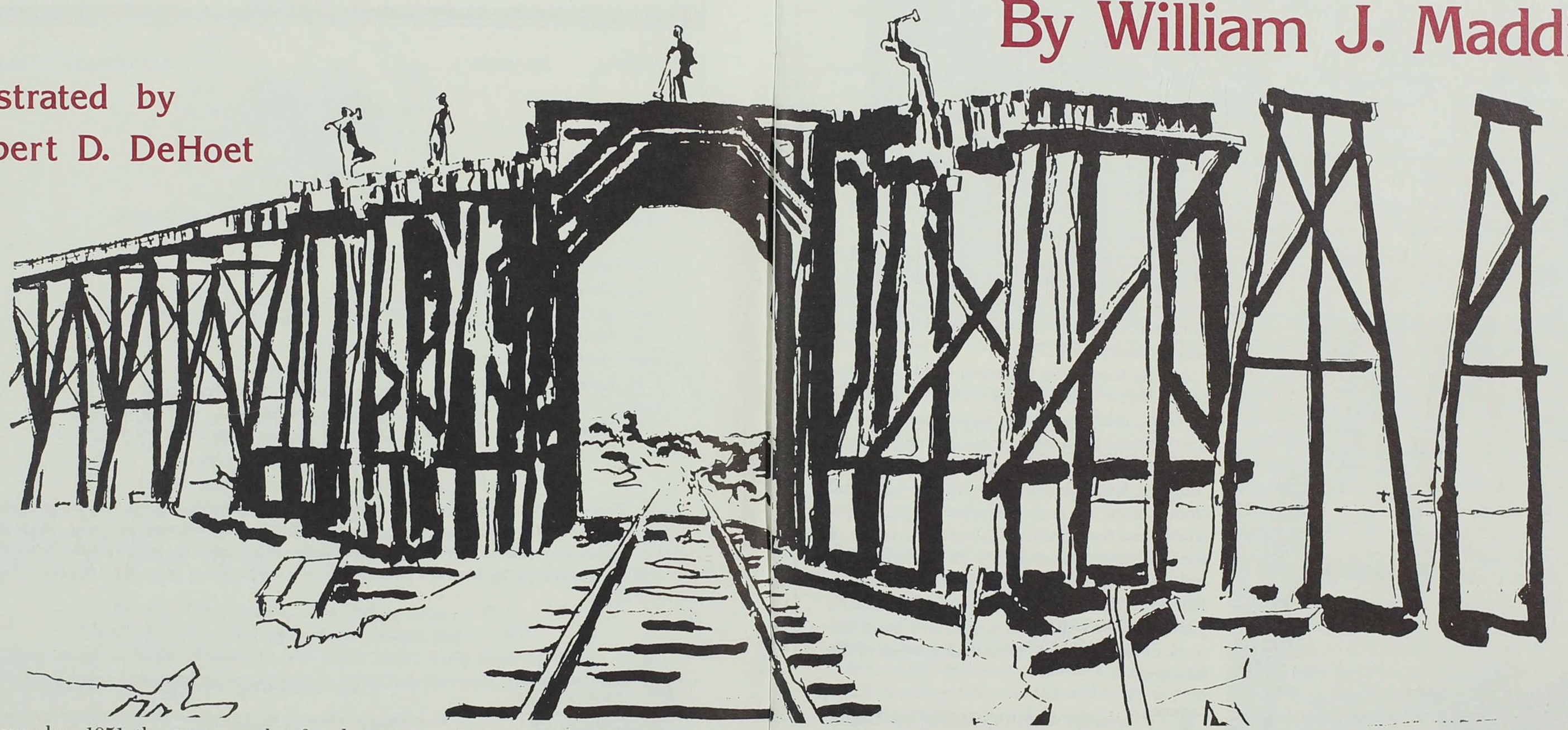

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the people of Manly remained angered by the injustice done to one of their citizens.

A month prior to the sorority incident, Manly's predominantly white high school had elected a black homecoming king and queen. When asked about the event years later, one of the students elected said, "I cannot think of any instance when I heard a derogatory comment about my being homecoming king." He went on to describe Manly in general:

> *I didn't feel any racial tension in Manly, Iowa. It never crossed my mind that I was any less or any greater than anybody else. We were all just people.*

But race relations in Manly had not always been so equitable and harmonious. In 1919 the Manly *Signal* printed this headline: COONS ARRESTED; MAKE GETAWAY. The news article concerned

> *five colored men who were busily engaged in gambling in a boxcar on 'smokey row.' Four of the dusky sports were landed in the calaboose and locked in the cage.*

In the 1920s Manly was marked by segregation at the workplace, in the schools, and in virtually every social sphere. It is apparent that a great many changes occurred in Manly between 1919 and 1951. How and when did these changes come about? How, in fact, did Manly acquire a relatively large black population?

In 1913 the Rock Island Railroad built a roundhouse in Manly. Only 346 people lived in Manly in 1910, but active recruiting by the railroad brought laborers swarming into the town in droves. By 1920 the town's population had increased to 1476.

Among those who migrated to Manly were ninety blacks. They came primarily from small towns in Oklahoma and Arkansas, attracted by the railroad's promise of jobs and free housing. But the jobs were ones that whites termed "nigger's work" (such as removing soot and cinders from the inner chambers of steam engines), and the housing was merely a series of boxcars, each furnished with a table, two chairs, and a few cots. The residents were resourceful, however; they carpeted their floors, papered their walls, and sometimes hung artwork in an attempt to create homes out of the boxcars.

Manly High School Homecoming King and Queen, Leroy Dunn and Delores Dunn, October 1951 (courtesy William J. Maddix)

For many whites in Manly, the boxcar community north of their town was a devil's playground: a cluster of informal casinos where black men guzzled whiskey and shot craps. To a certain degree this was true. On one occasion a black man shot another man for fleeing with the money during

A gathering of blacks from Manly and Mason City at a Mason City social club (courtesy William J. Maddix)

a crap game. According to the Kensett *News:*

> *The row started over a game of "craps" in the Negro bunk car near the roundhouse, and it is said it was a vicious fight while it lasted, as nearly all were armed with revolvers or "razzers."*

But whites went too far in their criticism when they characterized such incidents as typical. Whites exaggerated black crime, even as they ignored it in their own community, where gaming houses and brothels flourished.

Interracial tensions reached a peak in July 1922. A nationwide railroad strike was in progress, but blacks refused to join it, since they had been barred from the all-white unions. Whites retaliated by forcing them from the roundhouse. According to a black roundhouse worker, white strikers "all ganged up in cars and drove down [by the roundhouse] and blowed their horns and blowed and blowed and blowed until a fellow had to go." The worker's wife added, "Later the Ku Klux Klan burned a cross down there. I was so scared, I wanted to leave Manly." Other black women were afraid, too, and as a group they asked Rock Island officials to excuse their husbands from the roundhouse until the strike was over. Company officials granted their request.

When the strike ended, the Ku Klux Klan remained as a political force in Manly that was anti-Catholic as well as anti-black. Klansmen often appeared in public, a dozen or so at a time, wearing hoods and robes. Many whites were intrigued by the Klan and attended cross burnings, not necessarily because they sympathized with the Klan, but because they were attracted by the inevitable fistfights that occurred between white Catholics and the Klansmen.

Initially, blacks in Manly avoided direct confrontations with the Klan. As time passed and

as the Klan became increasingly unpopular in the white community, blacks united against the Klan members. Eventually the Klansmen limited their activities to burning crosses only at the fringe of the black community.

By 1930 the Klan had changed its strategy. As blacks gathered at the New Bethel Baptist Church for Christmas services that year, several Klansmen entered the rear of the church. They marched to the altar and put a brown paper bag under the Christmas tree, then marched from the church in silence. The bag contained fifty dollars. Blacks who were present at the time interpreted the "gift" of money as an attempt to induce the blacks not to venture beyond the confines of their own neighborhood.

White fear of alleged black crime had previously served as one of the Klan's rationales for advocating strict segregation. The purchase of the Manly *Signal* in 1921 by Rush Culver ended the era of magnifying black crime. When major crimes occurred, Culver reported them, but he also reported social and religious activities within the black community. Culver condemned the town's Ku Klux Klan and, in so doing, became a friend of the black community.

Culver facilitated contact between blacks and whites through his newspaper. When blacks sought to raise money for their church by holding bake sales, Sunday dinners, or musicals, Culver vigorously encouraged whites to attend. Many whites did so, not only those from Manly, but people from nearby towns as well.

The *Signal* also gave extensive and favorable press treatment to the Manly Colored Giants, a black baseball team that was one of the most successful in northern Iowa. The newspaper covered all the Giants' games, even when the team travelled to other towns in the area. Occasionally the *Signal* described the chicanery of the Giants' opponents: they would often hire

Manly school children in the 1930s (courtesy Willia J. Mac

players from out of town, in hopes of defeating the talented Giants.

The most intriguing games, from the standpoint of the residents of Manly, pitted the Giants against the Manly Vets, the town's white team. These contests were heated but friendly affairs; the fans were more concerned about the quality of baseball than they were about which team won. Since baseball skill, not skin color, determined the final score, blacks were in a position to compete on an equal basis with whites. And they did that rather well, winning most of the games against the Vets and eventually earning their respect. In 1926, when both the Giants and the Vets were losing players, the Vets invited the Giants to merge with them, and the Giants accepted.

The integrated baseball team raised hopes of integration elsewhere in Manly, but the Depression caused racial tensions to increase once again. The railroad work force decreased from

Maddix)

369 workers in 1930 to 305 the following year, due to a decrease in the volume of rail cargo. Blacks lost their jobs more frequently than whites. Since they were excluded from the all-white railroad unions, blacks were employed only as maintenance workers and were the first to be fired. When the diesel engine replaced the steam engine in the early 1930s, maintenance crews were further reduced, because fewer men were needed to maintain the new engine. Blacks who lost their jobs grumbled about union policies that ultimately preserved jobs for whites at their expense. There was little they could do, however, except seek other jobs.

Finding alternative employment was difficult in a single-industry town; consequently, about thirty blacks left Manly to look for jobs elsewhere. Blacks who stayed in the area travelled to nearby Mason City in search of jobs in the cement industry and in the packing houses. But they were rebuffed in these attempts and were forced to accept employment as bellhops or as laborers in car washes, for these were the jobs traditionally relegated to blacks in Mason City.

Some enterprising blacks circumvented these limited options. During the 1920s many blacks had raised chickens and pigs and had cultivated gardens that yielded cash crops. When the railroad layoffs began and economic disaster seemed imminent, some blacks intensified and expanded their farming operations. One man rented sixty acres of farmland and added more pigs and cows to his stock. Another man purchased forty acres of land, which he and his son farmed.

By 1933 the racial tension that had characterized the previous three years tapered off with the return of jobs and steady incomes. Although black and white baseball players had reinstituted segregated teams in 1932, they merged once again in 1933. Blacks and whites also began to socialize together more freely—at black-sponsored musicals and plays in Manly's previously segregated opera house; at a variety of community and social-club gatherings, including athletic events, fund-raising drives, and communal dinners; and even at black funerals.

The most significant social gains during the Depression years occurred in the school system. In 1933 a black youth was elected captain of the football team. Five years later his brother was elected vice-president of the junior class. Other black youths excelled in a variety of activities: as honor students in the classroom, as running backs on the football field, as leading actors on the stage, as select speakers in all-school ceremonies, and (on the elementary school level) as captains of spelling-bee teams.

Despite these apparent advances, race relations were not entirely congenial. The Klan had disbanded by 1933, but certain precepts and attitudes re-

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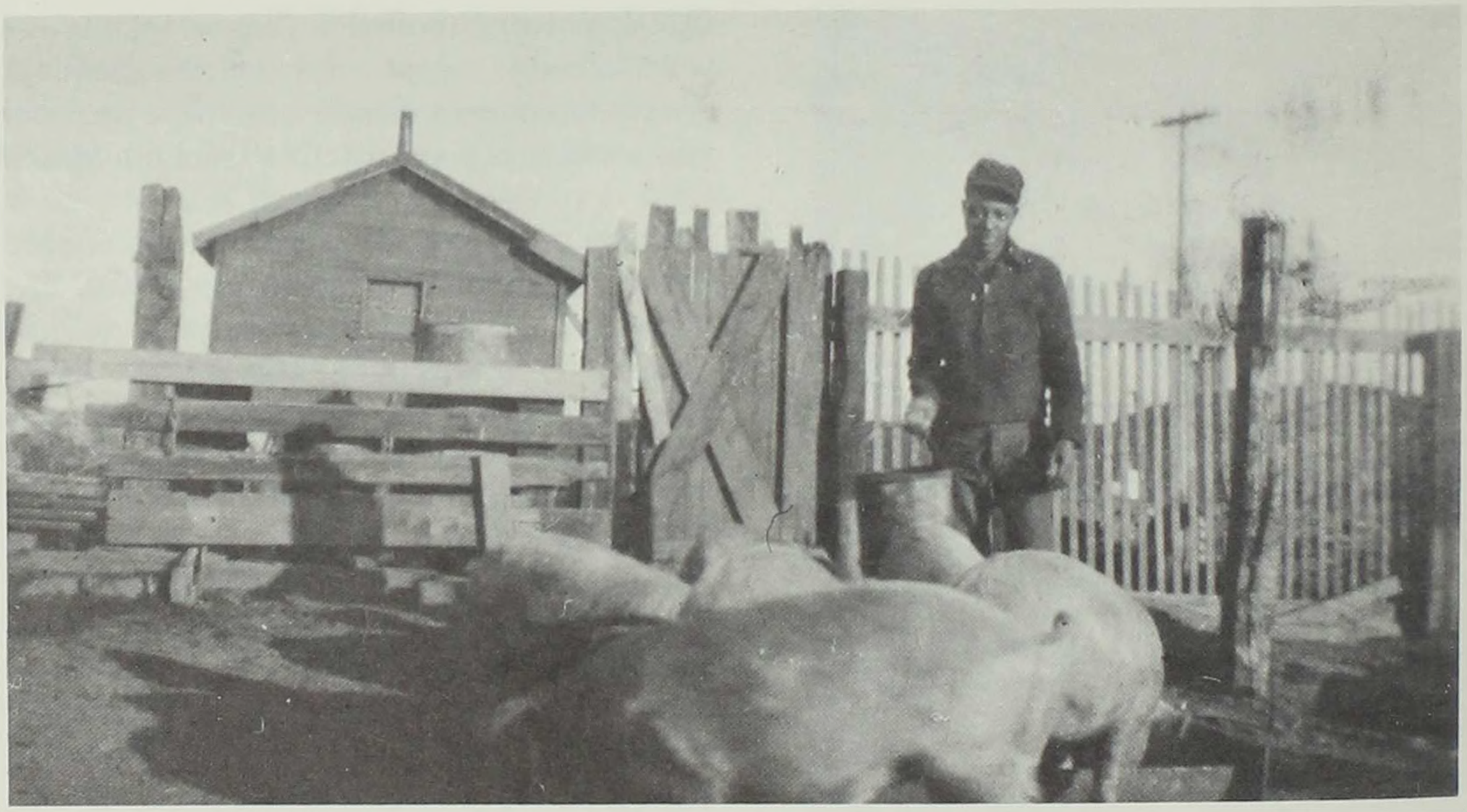


A Manly farmer feeding his pigs in his backyard in the 1920s (courtesy William J. Maddix)

mained inviolate among its members and sympathizers. Restrictive covenants, as well as racist behavior, prevented blacks from building or buying homes in the white community. When blacks built a new home in the white community for their minister, whites burglarized the home, covering its floors and walls with excrement. Legal means were employed by Manly's largest landholder, George L. Bosworth, who decreed that blacks could never buy property which he had originally sold.

World War II served as a catalyst for coalescing the energies of blacks and whites on a previously unprecedented scale in Manly. Rush Culver contributed to the war effort by reporting the whereabouts of both blacks and whites who were fighting overseas or working in defense-related jobs. Culver also printed letters from soldiers on the front page of the *Signal*. One black man in training at the Hampton Institute wrote:

> *Negro sailors are now a part of our campus. They are sent here to become seamen. . . . I see Lafeyette Robinson [another black from Manly] every day, as he is studying to become a machinist's mate, and I am studying to become a machinist's draftsman.*

During the war Culver also initiated the "North Manly News," a section in the *Signal* which, like other small-town newspaper columns, reported every event in the black community, regardless of importance. These reports tended to blur the perceived differences between the races, and whites began to realize that the activities and values of blacks were very similar to their own.

Alice Smith shattered long-standing social barriers when she recommended that her club, the United Servicewomen, admit black women who had sons fighting overseas. Several whites objected, but the vast majority agreed. According to Smith, "We had some who wasn't happy, [but] they all settled down and worked together." Eventually interracial ties within the group became so close that one black was

elected president and another became its historian. Other blacks were selected as delegates to county and state conventions.

Black and white women joined hands in such groups as the PTA and the Band Mothers' Club, as well as in a variety of ecumenical church groups. Shortly after the war, a choir from St. Paul's Evangelical Church performed for the New Bethel Baptist Church's thirty-second anniversary, and Manly's mayor addressed the congregation. Four years later black and white women held their World Day of Prayer service at New Bethel in the black community. That same year New Bethel fielded a softball team in the town's Church League. The unity of the war years was further exemplified by the decision of the Manly Town Council to incorporate the black community into Manly proper. Thereafter, the black community was eligible for road maintenance, sewer usage, water lines, and other governmental amenities.

As in the 1930s, the most significant changes during and after the war occurred in the school system. Academic achievements by blacks were increasingly recognized. Social groups became integrated to the extent that black students did not feel compelled to associate only with other blacks.

Gwen Moore, who later became embroiled in the sorority incident at the University of Iowa, expressed a similar sentiment. Though she acknowledged that name-calling and fighting had occurred between blacks and whites in grade school, she observed that students eventually began choosing friends on the basis of merit and mutual interest, not race. In addition to earning several music and scholastic awards, Moore was president and valedictorian of her high school graduating class.

Leroy Dunn, the homecoming king of his class in 1951, remembered Manly as an extremely progressive town. Whites encouraged blacks to participate in all activities, he said, recalling that he never encountered racism until he left Manly. A white classmate of Dunn's said there was community pride in Dunn's accomplishments. Concerning race relations in the school, he noted that "both races were aware of skin color, but that awareness was not negative." He conceded that the parents of both races "were not quite as close, because communication didn't exist for them as it did in our age group. Yet friendship did exist; a good working relationship was there."

Unfortunately, Manly was an exception to the pattern of American race relations in the twentieth century. The incident involving Gwen Moore and Phi Gamma Nu was one of dozens of local controversies that developed across the nation in the 1950s. These years marked the difficult beginnings of more equitable relations between black and white Americans. Manly provided a viable scenario for racial relations, one that might have eliminated the need for the violent confrontations of the emerging civil rights movement. □

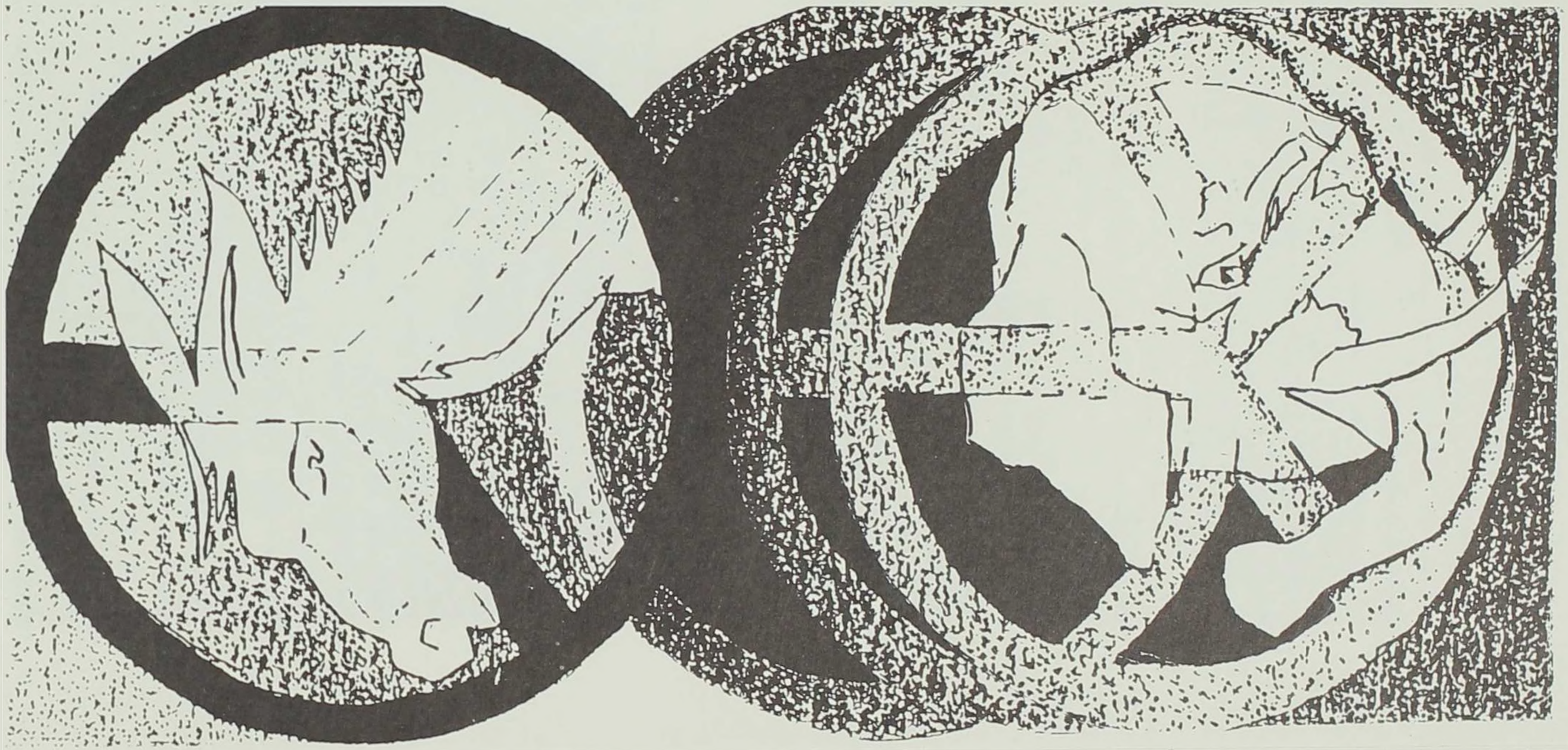
Note on Sources

Research materials consulted for this article included *Manly's Memories*, prepared by the Manly History Committee (Manly, Ia.: The Committee, 1977); files of the Des Moines *Register*, the Manly *Signal*, and the Kensett *News*; and interviews with John and Coma Page, Leroy Dunn, Cecil Douglas, Ed Pinta, and Alice Smith. Also valuable were correspondence with Doris Page and records in the Worth County Courthouse in Northwood.

THE VIETNAM ERA

IN HOW A POINTHOS

BY THOMAS S. SMITH



Iowa's heritage of agrarian Republicanism underwent a surprisingly colorful, though brief, transformation during the late 1960s. The charismatic Harold Hughes and a host of other political figures led Iowa politics on an ideological merry-go-round that centered on the Vietnam War.

In June 1965 Representative John Schmidhauser, a freshman Democrat, heralded the first sign of Iowa disenchantment with President Lyndon Johnson's Vietnam policies. He joined twenty-seven other congressmen in signing a petition that called for public hearings on American involvement in Vietnam.

Opposition to the Vietnam War became a campaign issue in the 1966 congressional elections when E.B. Smith, the Democratic senatorial candidate, faced GOP incumbent Jack Miller. Smith, who had previously served in the U.S. State Department, was a history professor at Iowa State University. Although he did not carry out a full-scale attack on administration policy, Smith made an appeal to anti-war voters to oppose increased aerial bombing of North Vietnam. He argued that his position on Vietnam was "not too far" from that of Iowa independent peace candidate Robert Day. Iowa voters were also exposed to national anti-war politics when Senator Robert Kennedy campaigned for the state Democratic ticket, criticizing Johnson's escalation of the war. The huge crowds that greeted Kennedy throughout the state responded favorably to his speeches, though it is uncertain whether they shared his anti-war views.

Nevertheless, Vietnam did not emerge as the significant issue of the 1966 elections. Smith's campaign stressed Senator Miller's votes against Medicare, feed grain programs, and minimum wage legislation. Smith's foreign policy statements were not forceful enough to draw substantial supporters away from Robert Day's campaign. Day, in fact, denounced Smith's attempts to capitalize on Day's own anti-war stance. Smith was overwhelmed by Miller in the general election, and in the same election year Representative Schmidhauser — who had been praised by his Iowa constituents for his opposition to the activities of the House Un-American Activities Committee during his first term in office — was also defeated.

By 1967, however, national anti-war sentiment rose as President Johnson's war efforts met with increasing disapproval. Governor Hughes, who had previously been a supporter of administration policies, boldly declared his opposition to the war. The conjunction of Hughes' anti-war posture with the political excitement generated by the presidential candidacies of Senators Eugene McCarthy and Robert Kennedy catapulted Vietnam out of the sphere of campus demonstrations. The war became an issue hotly debated by Iowa politicians.

Governor Hughes, a well-known friend and ally of Kennedy, stunned the state on August 22, 1968, when he endorsed McCarthy for president. He cited Vietnam as the primary reason for his decision. "It is now clear," he said, "that we do not have the resources to provide guns and butter — or even guns and margarine — in terms of our domestic needs. Vietnam is not the only issue, but it is the key issue." Hughes' endorsement of McCarthy was quickly echoed by a number of other prominent Democrats, including Lieutenant Governor Robert Fulton and former Representative Schmidhauser.

Those who argue that Hughes made this move for reasons of political expediency ignore the results of the Des Moines *Register* polls taken during this period. One poll indicated that Richard Nixon would defeat McCarthy for the presidency by a 50 to 34 percent margin in Iowa. The same poll also revealed that Iowa voters, on the question of who "could best handle the war," preferred Nixon to McCarthy

by a margin of 49 percent to 26 percent. Other Iowa newspapers adopted a more intrusive approach in commenting on Hughes' decision. The Waterloo *Courier* accused Hughes of moving "to the far left of American politics" for his endorsement of McCarthy. Such attacks did not intimidate Hughes, who chose to deliver the nominating speech for McCarthy at the tumultuous Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

The Iowa electorate seemed fragmented by Hughes' anti-war stance. An Iowa poll revealed that 29 percent of the electorate believed that Hughes' endorsement of McCarthy hurt his Senate candidacy, 20 percent believed it helped, 31 percent said it made no difference, and 20 percent had no opinion.

Following a massive primary victory over token opposition, Governor Hughes was confronted with the political struggle of his career in his 1968 Senate race. His opponent, David Stanley, a forty-year-old state senator from Muscatine, was reputedly a moderate Republican. During the campaign, however, Stanley's statements on Vietnam foreshadowed the policy statements of Richard Nixon during the "Vietnamization" period. Declaring that "we must build peace through strength," Stanley attacked Hughes' call for an unconditional bombing halt. Stanley's campaign utilized much of the traditional rhetoric employed by anti-Communist partisans of the 1950s. For example, one campaign ad featured Stanley gazing at the Berlin Wall. The caption quoted Stanley's assertion that "this ugly Wall is Communist tyranny's attempt to block human freedom."

Stanley also tried to encourage voter backlash against anti-war activity. He attacked Governor Hughes' policies of leniency towards college disturbances in Iowa City in 1967. "Forty highway patrolmen who were sitting in a bus watching that riot wanted to help, but couldn't, because of an order from Des Moines to stay put." When these remarks are viewed in the context of his attacks on the Great Society social welfare policies, Stanley's conservative "law and order" stance becomes clearer.

Stanley's rhetoric did not cause Governor Hughes to moderate his criticism of the war. Hughes' campaign may be seen as a classic example of a politician who sought to educate rather than inflame voters. Hughes responded to Stanley's strident rhetoric with a serene optimism:

> *We can find the strength to overcome these forces that threaten our way of life. But military might alone will not assure peace among nations. . . . We must also unite our people and bind the wounds of our society. As the most powerful nation on earth, America can afford to take the initiative for peace, and we have a moral obligation to take that initiative.*

Hughes' campaign speeches presented audiences with graphic descriptions of nuclear, germ, and gas warfare in a determined attempt to dramatize the danger of militarism. In response to Stanley's criticism of his call for a bombing halt, Hughes simply asked, "Do we want to end war by making more war?"

In November Hughes defeated Stanley by 6,000 votes. Nixon's landslide in Iowa and Stanley's heavily financed campaign blunted Hughes' reputation as one of the most powerful vote-getters in Iowa history. The final results indicated a rather dramatic urban-rural split in the state, with Des Moines and Cedar

Note on Sources

This article is based on information found in Iowa newspapers of the 1960s, including the Des Moines *Register*, the Waterloo *Courier*, the Burlington *Hawkeye*, and the Cedar Rapids *Gazette*. Also useful were the election statistics printed in the biennial editions of the *Iowa Official Register* and the analysis of Democratic party politics presented in James C. Larew, *A Party Reborn: The Democrats of Iowa, 1950-1974* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1980).

Governor Harold Hughes (SHSI)

Rapids as major Hughes strongholds.

What impact did Vietnam have on the election? Hughes' educational campaign succeeded to a certain extent: one month before the election a *Register* poll revealed that Hughes was thought to be best equipped to handle the war by a 43 to 32 percent margin over Stanley, with 25 percent undecided. On the other hand, the depth of strong anti-war sentiment reflected in the poll is questionable, since the same poll showed the voters' strong faith in Nixon's ability to find a solution to Vietnam. Hughes' great advantage was his enormous personal stature: when asked which candidate would make the best "impression for the State of Iowa" in the national spotlight, Hughes was chosen over Stanley by a margin of 56 to 30 percent, with 14 percent undecided. Clearly, the force of Hughes' personality managed to draw voters who were either ambivalent about or even supportive of the war. Voting for Hughes, however, did not prevent Iowans from voting against other anti-war candidates; John Schmidhauser was defeated in his 1968 comeback campaign in the First District, and the Republican state senator Tom Riley, who ran on an anti-war platform against Representative John Culver, was also defeated in the Second District race.

Vestiges of the late 1960s anti-war sentiment resurfaced in Iowa politics in the election campaigns of the early 1970s. George McGovern made a relatively impressive showing in 1972, and liberal Democrats John Culver and Dick Clark won their respective races for the U.S. Senate in 1972 and 1974.

Eventually, the Nixon administration responded to the growing national consensus that the Vietnam conflict should be terminated. Unfortunately perhaps, gradual withdrawal of troops and the ambiguous implementation of Nixon's "peace with honor" plan foreclosed the continuing heated ideological debates that had stamped Iowa politics in the decade of the 1960s. □

Serving the Cause of Peace:

The Iowa Campuses' Vietnam Protest

By Matthew Boyle

The late spring of 1970 was a turbulent time on the college and university campuses of Iowa. Nearly every campus featured demonstrations, sit-ins, sleep-ins, and protests concerned with American involvement in the Vietnam War. As the Vietnam War had intensified and become a prolonged and bloody conflict, opposition to American participation in the war had similarly intensified. Anti-war activities reflected the protesters' growing sense of frustration over their apparent lack of influence on American policy. The violence of the demonstrations of May 1970 was an acute response to President Richard Nixon's decision to invade Cambodia on April 30. The violent demonstrations that erupted in Iowa and throughout the nation were the explosion of tensions that had been growing for months and years, touched off by the spark of the Cambodian invasion.

The demonstrations got off to a mild and undramatic, but perhaps prophetic, start on April 24. That day, seventy-five students presented petitions to University of Iowa president Willard Boyd demanding the end of the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) as a university-sponsored program. President Boyd was not available, but his assistant, Robert Engel, accepted the petitions and promised that President Boyd would consider them.

Rising tensions, however, quickly exacerbated the situation. On April 28, a set of the Johnson County Selective Service files in the local Selective Service office was set afire. Iowa City police viewed the fire as political in nature, but concluded that it was not related to a bomb explosion the previous night in downtown Iowa City. The following night, a typically innocuous dormitory water fight turned into an angry demonstration at the Iowa City Civic Center when rumors spread that some of the participants had been arrested.

The demand for an end to the university's ROTC program, which would become a central issue in the weeks to come, was the objective of a peaceful demonstration on May 1. A crowd of seven hundred demonstrators marched from the university's Pentacrest area to the new Recreation Building across the river in an effort to halt an ROTC awards ceremony scheduled for that day. Brushing aside six campus policemen who tried to block the doorway, the protesters carried on peaceful discussions about the war and ROTC. They lingered until it was announced that the awards ceremony had been cancelled.

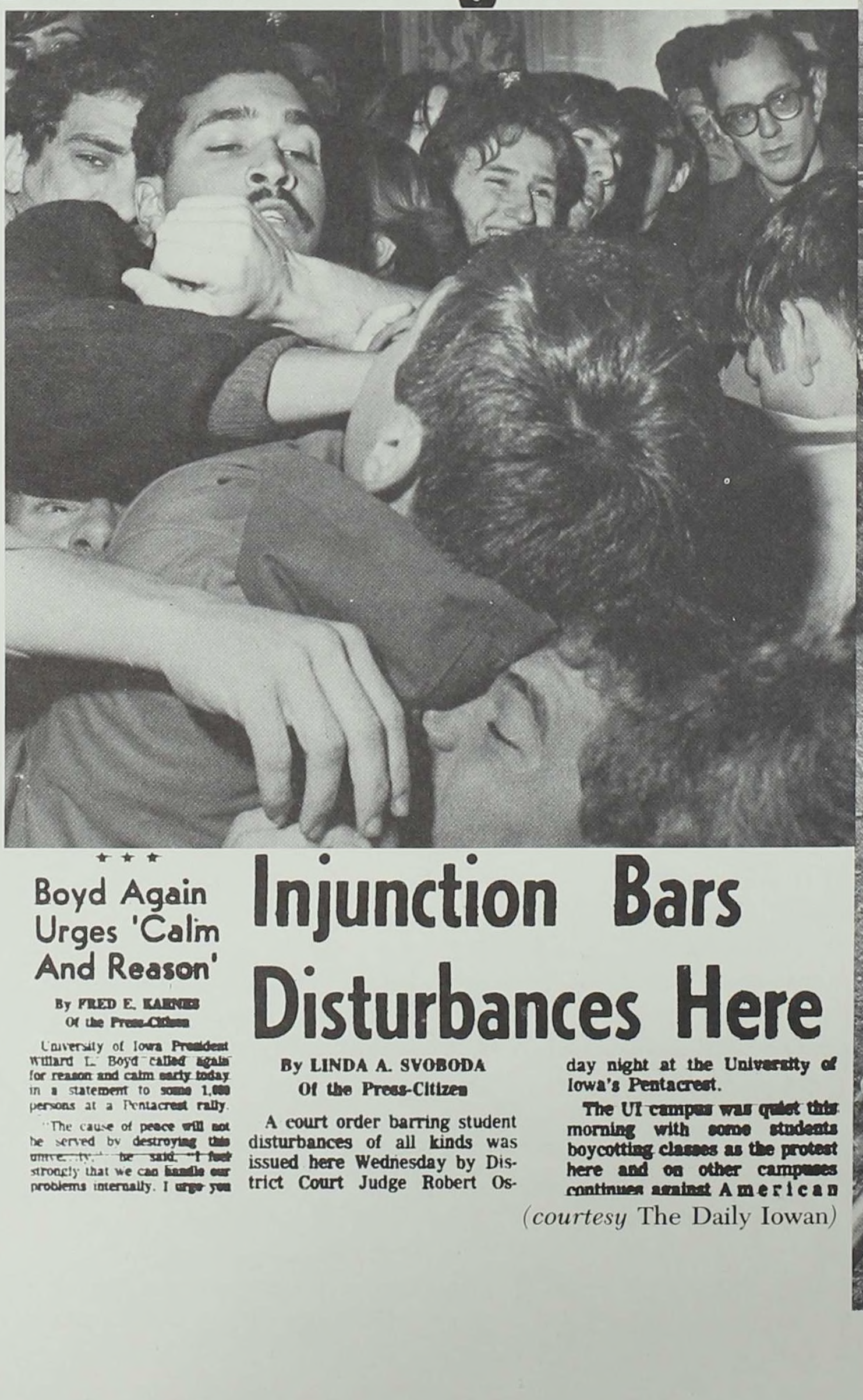
After these demonstrations, Iowa campuses remained quiet until May 4, when news spread that four students had been killed by National Guardsmen at Kent State University in Ohio. The immediate response to the incident was a call throughout Iowa for participation in a national boycott of classes on Wednesday, May 6. The call for a boycott met a strong response. At the University of Northern Iowa, the faculty voted to turn their classes over to discussions of the war, while at Drake University 2,500 students congregated on the commons and agreed to boycott classes. More active demonstrations occurred at Grinnell College, where student protesters occupied the Air Force ROTC building, and at Iowa State University in Ames, where 150 students held an all-night sit-in at the Armory.

At the University of Iowa, the news of Kent State became a call to arms. *Daily Iowan* editor Lowell Forte wrote a scathing editorial on Nixon following Kent State, charging that "he has sold the youth of America down the suicidal drain — into the Southeast Asia sewer that has frustrated this nation for the past several years." On May 5 a group of from four to six hundred protesters marched to the National Guard Armory south of campus. Some of the demonstrators attempted to break down the doors of the Armory with railroad ties, while others smashed the windows with rocks. Returning to campus, the demonstrators staged a sit-in in front of the Old Capitol on the Pentacrest. In spite of the presence of some fifty riot-equipped police officers, they then marched on the Civic Center. After a confrontation there, the demonstrators moved to a new location and then dispersed when the police were reinforced by officers from the Iowa highway patrol. As a result of the violent demonstrations on May 5, fifty-one people were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct.

The following day the campus was fairly quiet. Although about five hundred

(continued page 146)

Students Begin Strike



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Boyd Again Urges 'Calm And Reason'

By FRED E. KARNES
Of the Press-Citizen

University of Iowa President Willard L. Boyd called again for reason and calm early today in a statement to some 1,000 persons at a Pentacrest rally.

"The cause of peace will not be served by destroying this university," he said. "I feel strongly that we can handle our problems internally. I urge you

Injunction Bars Disturbances Here

By LINDA A. SVOBODA
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A court order barring student disturbances of all kinds was issued here Wednesday by District Court Judge Robert Os-

day night at the University of Iowa's Pentacrest.

The UI campus was quiet this morning with some students boycotting classes as the protest here and on other campuses continues against American

(courtesy The Daily Iowan*)*

Many Colleges Reopen, Some Closed After Week of Student P

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Thousands of college students were still on strike today and many campuses shut down for the duration of the school year in the aftermath of a week of tragedy and turmoil. Many other institutions officially reopened, however.

Still angry over fighting in Cambodia and the killing of four Kent State students in Ohio by National Guardsmen, students at many campuses continued to strike despite orders from college officials reopening classes.

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Many, like the student body of the University of Maine, were voting today and Tuesday whether to continue boycotting classes or return to their studies.

The students' strike information center at Brandeis University today listed 450 schools on strike, and said it had confirmed that 157 schools will be struck indefinitely. A ham radio network of 150 stations was set

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Columbia University was holding classes, but New York University was closed indefinitely while faculties of each division held meetings to decide on future action.

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Nixon Summons Governors To Discuss Protest, War

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon summoned the nation's governors to the White House today to discuss campus unrest and Southeast Asia in the wake of student strikes, antiwar protests and sporadic violence that climaxed in a massive weekend demonstration in the nation's capitol.

Nixon called the meeting last week after campus violence erupted following his decision to send American troops into Cam-

communities with the theme 'No business as usual.'"

He said the weekend demonstration marked the beginning of a grass-roots movement swelling across the country.

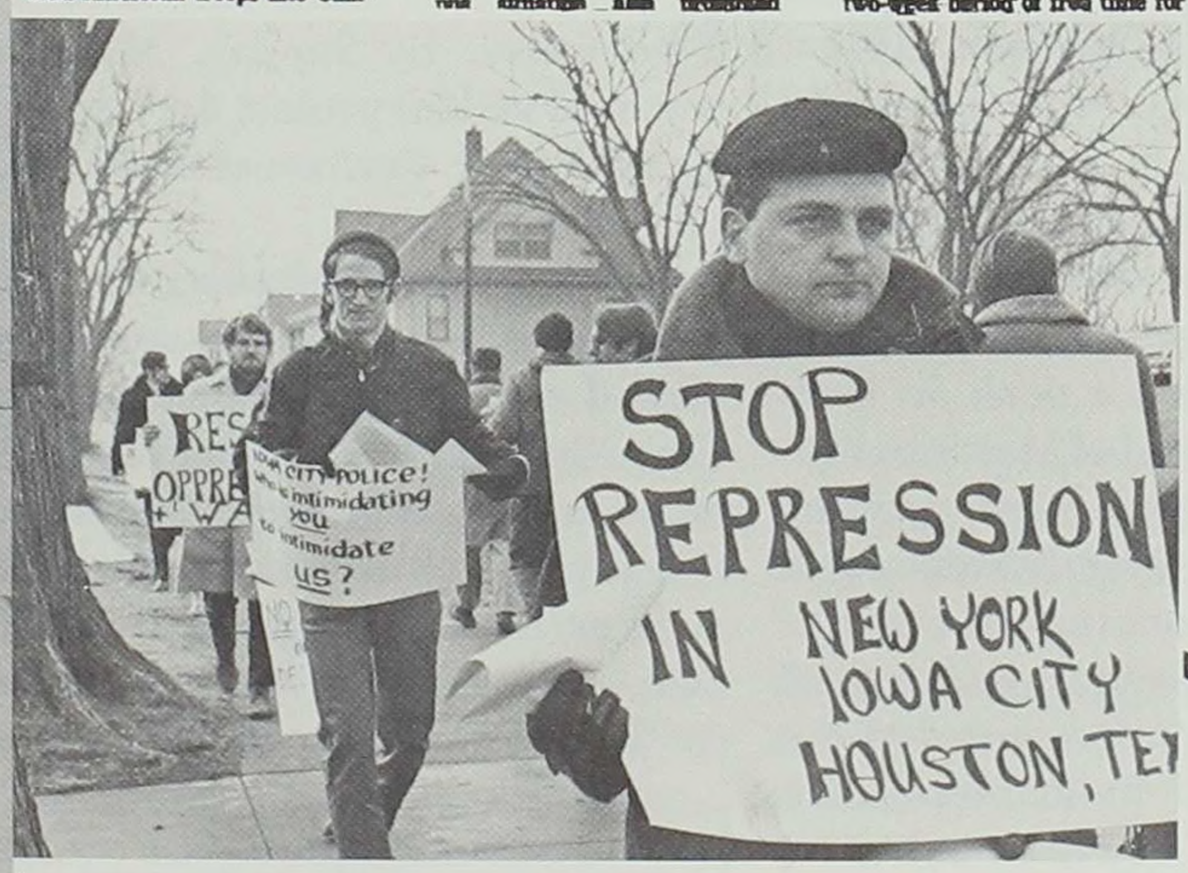
Antiwar spokesmen also said efforts would be stepped up to spread strikes to more campuses and industry in an attempt to cripple the "war economy."

The apparently volatile cam-

Princeton University adopted the proposal last week.

Duke University President Terry Sanford also announced plans to give students a week off to campaign in November. Nixon was graduated from the university's law school.

Chancellor Albert Bowker of New York City's Board of Higher Education, which runs the 165,000-student City University, said he would recommend a two-week period of free time for



Guard Called!

Old Armory 'Temporary' Destroyed

By JOHN M. JEFFRIES
Of the Press-Citizen

Fire destroyed the university owned Old Armory Temporary building early this morning. Firemen believe it was arson.

The two-story frame building, fronting Iowa Avenue on the north and University Library on the south, housed the rhetoric program and writing laboratory.

Fire Chief Dean Bebee said this morning that the blaze appeared "to have been set."

Persons having offices in the World War II era temporary building had been warned two years ago not to keep any valuable papers or other items in the structure. Consequently, it is believed that losses of any scholarly work were slight.

Firemen received the call at 1:08 a.m., and when they arrived the middle portion of the barracks-type structure was engulfed in flames. Firemen believe a flammable substance was used. Bebee said he thought the fire started in an eastside entry way.

All equipment from the city's central and westside stations were sent, and off-duty firemen were called in to help.

The fire was prevented from spreading to the adjacent Old Armory, occupied by the radio-television division of the Department of Speech and Drama. The Department of Geography also is housed there.

Firemen had the blaze contained by 6 a.m., but several men still were there three hours later. The middle portion of the structure was burned to the ground while charred sections on the north and south remained standing.

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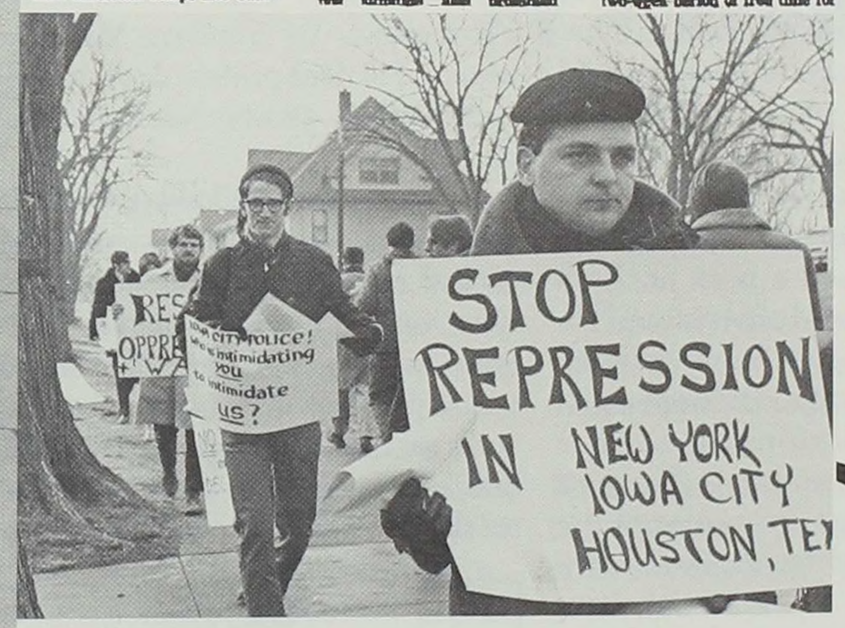

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(courtesy The Daily Iowan)

demonstrators collected for a sleep-in at the Pentacrest, their activities were peaceful, a situation due largely to the efforts of a group of faculty, student, and citizen volunteers wearing white armbands. President Boyd made his own plea for peace on Thursday, May 7, when he cancelled a planned Governor's Day ceremony, but with a tone of resignation. Boyd added that "It must be clear to all that this cancellation involves a surrender of principle in the interest of public safety."

The demonstrations continued, however. Early Friday morning, several demonstrators of the hundreds who were in the area broke into the Old Capitol and set off a smoke bomb, raising fears that the building was on fire. President Boyd, who was in Des Moines at the time, ordered the area cleared. As a result, more than two hundred demonstrators were arrested and taken away in university buses. Meanwhile, twenty-three Iowa State students had been arrested in Ames for blocking the entrance to the local draft board office, and Grinnell College officials had announced that the remainder of the college semester would be cancelled in order to allow students and faculty to participate in anti-war activities.

The period of violent demonstrations sparked by the Cambodian invasion and the Kent State incident reached a peak on Iowa campuses during the weekend of May 9 and 10. In Iowa City on Friday night a frame building called the Old Armory Temporary went up in flames. By Saturday morning, Governor Robert Ray had stationed about three hundred National Guardsmen within five miles of the city, and National Guard helicopters were cruising above its streets. "It was an unbelievable fact," said one highway patrolman later, "that we were carrying shotguns. It looked like the Cambodian front." Reacting to the rising tone of violence in Iowa City, President Boyd declared: "The cause of peace will not be served by destroying this university."

After meeting with university officials, President Boyd announced on Sunday that the university would not be closed, but that students who feared for their safety could leave the campus without being penalized. In his statement, Boyd said that he sympathized with the protesters' demands but that he viewed education as an equally important issue. "For those who would say that the military intervention into Cambodia is an important symbol," Boyd declared, "I must respond that learning in a free society is an equally important symbol. If the University were to give in to force at this time, a great principle would be lost."

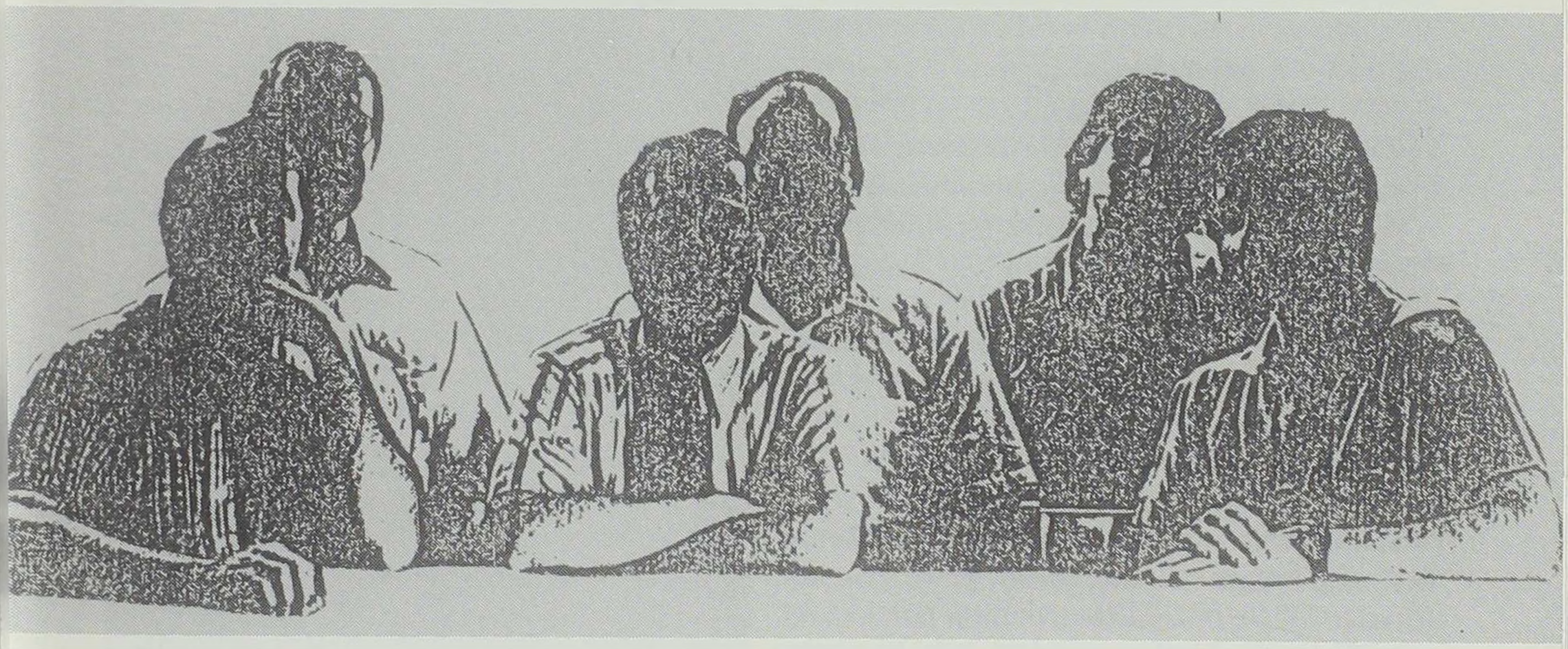
Boyd's decision led to what was described as a non-obstructional, non-violent strike. By late Tuesday, nearly 12,000 of the university's students had left the campus. Though the strike continued throughout the week, Governor Ray withdrew the National Guard units from the Iowa City area on Wednesday. By Sunday, May 17, the three weeks of violent protest drew to a close with an Ecumenical Pentacost held by Iowa City churches.

In the days that followed, the Iowa City campus and college campuses around the state returned to the calm that normally prevails at exam time. The energy of the anti-war movement in Iowa was channelled into more traditional political directions, resulting in efforts such as the campaign to adopt Amendment 609, which would have put constitutional limits on the President's war making powers. □

Note on Sources

Sources used in this article included issues of the Iowa City *Press-Citizen*, the *Daily Iowan*, and the Des Moines *Register* for the period from April through June 1970 and a pamphlet, *Riot, Rhetoric, and Responsibility*, published by the University of Iowa School of Journalism in 1970.

AND YOUNG MEN FIGHT THEM



BY KATHRYN HELENE

When Jerry Lembke left his hometown of Hinton, Iowa in 1967 for a tour of military service as assistant to the chaplain, he felt mixed emotions. He was leaving his family and familiar surroundings to serve his country in an undeclared war 12,000 miles away. But he looked forward to the adventure, and his first few weeks in Vietnam confirmed his interest in the lush, mountainous countryside. He wrote to his mother frequently, describing the beauty of the landscape and joking about the pervasiveness of the Army's black-top roads. His first several letters contained little of politics, but he did make a point of warning his mother of Viet Cong supporters in the States who faked telegrams announcing the deaths of American soldiers.

In an early letter Jerry poked fun at the bureaucracy of the Army:

> *The army gives you a job it takes ten minutes to do, but puts so many obstacles in your path that it takes a whole day.*

He also devoted part of his letter to a description of the month-long Vietnamese celebration of Tet:

> *They dress in their finest clothes, and all the families seem to be on the road going to Grandma's house.*

Gradually, his Vietnam journey took twists and turns that Jerry found increasingly disturbing. His letters narrated a growing disillusionment with his superiors and with the Army in general, which gave rise to his budding sympathy for the anti-war protesters at home.

> *There is no justice in the military. The very principle that we are supposedly defending, democracy, we are forbidden to practice.*

Jerry served out his term and returned home to Iowa. He enrolled in college almost immediately, seeking to put emotional distance between his life at home and his year in Vietnam.

Iowans who enlisted during the Vietnam era fall roughly into two categories: those who enlisted to follow the tradition of their fathers and grandfathers and those who enlisted to gain educational and economic benefits. Enlistees from the 1960s left their families to go off to war, basking in community approval and pride. Vietnam veterans from the 1970s received a different send-off. Although wars have always had their political detractors, Vietnam during the 1970s was synonymous with a sort of national schizophrenia. One Iowa veteran who enlisted near the end of the war recalls that:

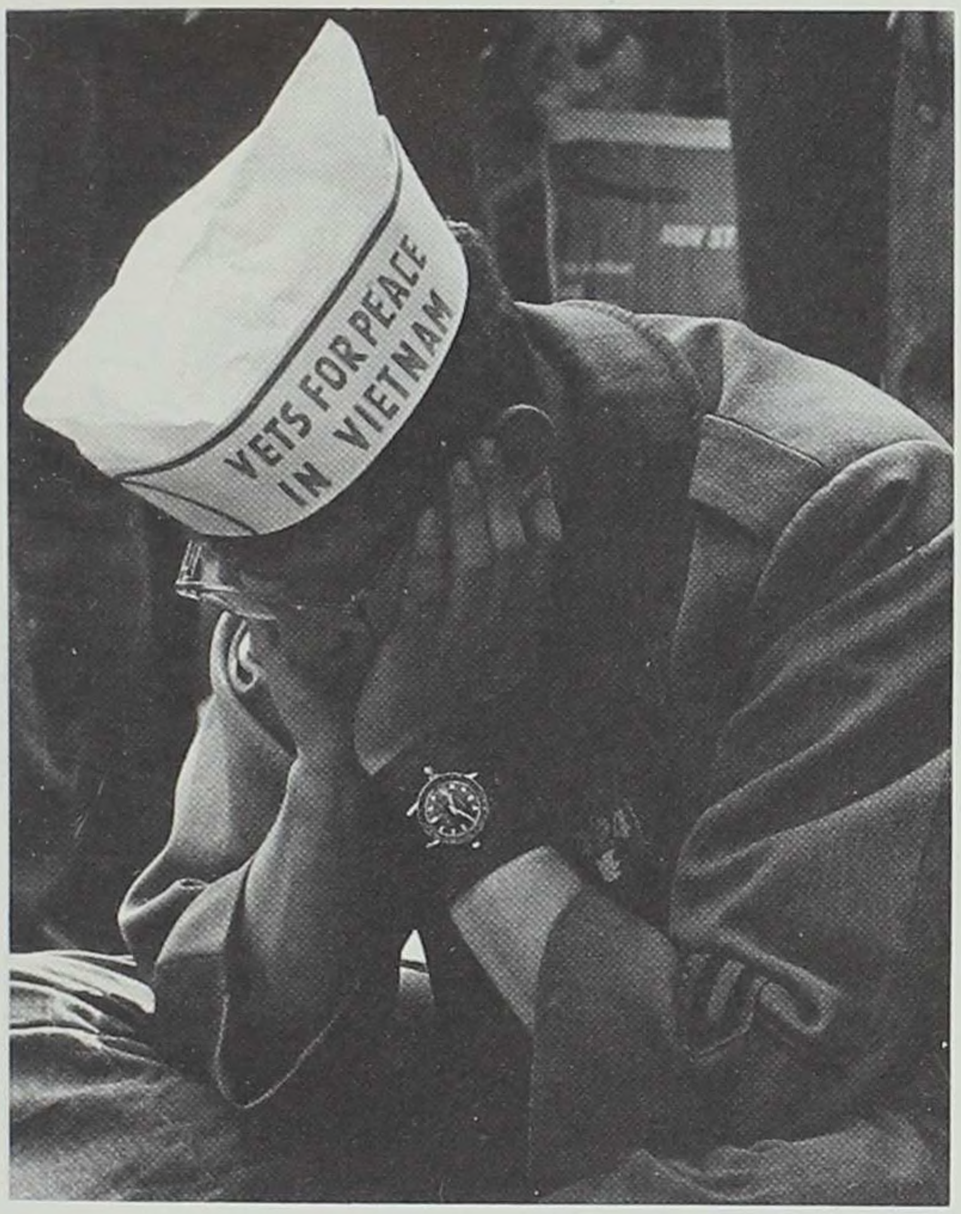
> *the split seemed to be among age groups. Older people in my hometown of Chariton were conservative, and more obviously in favor of an old-fashioned patriotism. To my friends, I was an oddball. They couldn't understand why I would want to enlist. But I wanted the college benefits.*

Their benefits and homecomings proved to be mixed blessings for some veterans. One Iowa veteran discovered a curious dividing line when he returned to his parents' home in Creston:

> *The day I returned to Iowa from 'Nam my Dad asked me to put on my uniform and decorations and join him at his local VFW bar; that night we couldn't buy a single drink [because everyone in the bar was buying them for us]. A few weeks later, after I had enrolled in college [under the GI bill] and grown a neatly trimmed beard, these same VFWs were commiserating with my father about his "hippie son."*

Other Iowa veterans confirm a marked difference in the attitudes of their communities. "There were no parades to welcome us," one said.

Furthermore, the state of the economy for returning veterans, especially toward the end of the war in 1973, was dismal. Newspapers proclaimed Governor Robert Ray's supervision of a six-state job search for veterans. The reception lines at employment offices sometimes paralleled the lack of response from their communities when they returned from Vietnam. The increasing unpopularity of the war — reflected in journalists' exclusives about drug abuse, wartime atrocities, and psychological problems — often made it difficult for returning veterans to find jobs. Choosing school over jobs eased the transition from Southeast Asia to American society, and this



(*courtesy* The Daily Iowan)

decision was greatly facilitated by the GI Bill. Nonetheless, Vietnam veterans were set apart from their fellow classmates by both age and experience. One veteran used this distance to advantage during the volatile spring of 1970 at the University of Iowa:

> *I organized an informal group called "The Monitors." We wore white arm bands and tried to keep people from being hurt. One night we found ourselves forming a human chain between angry students on the Pentacrest, paramilitary deputies on the sidewalk, and jocks throwing bottles from the roof of the Airliner [a local bar]. Despite my sympathy for the anti-war protesters, I felt that I could understand the attitudes of each group.*

The Veterans' Center at the University of Iowa, which was bustling in the early 1970s, provided an excellent forum in which returning veterans could express their conflicting feelings and emotions about the war. It also provided a network of practical contacts and sources of information to guide them through the continuing maze of military bureaucracy.

Eventually, the national conscience chose to condemn the Vietnam War and to exonerate most veterans as its victims, rather than its perpetrators. Indeed, the paraplegics, the men afflicted with the residual effects of Agent Orange, and those who still suffer from the form of shell-shock known as post-Vietnam psychiatric syndrome (PVNPS) are living testimony to the anti-war rhetoric that old men make wars and young men fight them. □

Note on Sources

Sources used in this article include the Jerry Lembke Papers at the State Historical Society of Iowa, an editorial in *U.S. News and World Report*, April 9, 1973, p. 100, and personal interviews with Iowa Vietnam veterans.

Buddy Holly (courtesy Buddy Holly Memorial Society)

buddy holly: the iowa connection

by kathryn helene

Growing up in the 1950s has been variously described as bland, calamitous, homogeneous, and confusing. It was a time characterized by the Cold War, Joseph McCarthy, *Brown v. Board of Education*, likeable Ike, and the emergence of rock 'n' roll.

Buddy Holly — singer, songwriter, and consummate musician — was a key figure in the transformation of country music and rhythm-and-blues into the phenomenon of rock 'n' roll. His tragic death by plane crash in the midst of an Iowa blizzard was memorialized in Don McLean's "American Pie" as "the day the music died." Yet his meteoric career, which included such hits as "That'll Be the Day" and "Peggy Sue," spanned only seventeen months. Musicians as diverse as Paul McCartney and Waylon Jennings have acknowledged a tremendous debt to the music of Buddy Holly. But to his ardent fans — especially those in the Midwest and in Great Britain, where Buddy Holly and the Crickets toured — he is a living presence.

Although his contribution to rock 'n' roll music and its progeny is undisputed, the origins of Buddy's own musical style are often debated. Born Charles Hardin Holley in Lubbock, Texas in 1936, Buddy began taking piano lessons at age eleven. Both of his older brothers played the guitar, and before long Buddy requested his own. Guitars took center stage at the frequent live music jamborees in western Texas. Although Lubbock also boasted a well-attended symphony orchestra, bluegrass music — which Buddy loved for its fast, driving rhythms — was a popular, if less respectable, musical style.

While still in junior high school, Buddy met Bob Montgomery, who shared his affection for bluegrass. The two boys used Buddy's parents' living room as a studio and practiced their guitar music from school's end until midnight. Their perseverance did not go unrewarded; they were applauded enthusiastically when they

performed at school functions. In 1953, when Buddy was seventeen, the duo was offered a spot on Lubbock's pop-music station, KDAV.

Buddy and Bob performed primarily country duets for KDAV. They were influenced by the music of Hank Williams. Buddy idolized the country star and adapted Williams' famous yodeling technique into his own inimitable "hiccup." Some music historians describe the music of the "Buddy and Bob Show" as being influenced by the "Tex-Mex" sound. But, despite the geographical proximity of Mexico, there is no evidence to indicate that either Buddy or Bob was actually exposed to this music.

John Goldrosen, author of a biography of Holly, discredits the persistent myth that Elvis Presley was Buddy's most significant influence. It is true that Elvis was booked into Lubbock as early as 1955. Lubbock teenagers, however, gave him a lukewarm reception. The story that Buddy Holly was inspired to leap onto the stage while Elvis was performing is apocryphal, but Buddy did acknowledge a certain fascination for Elvis, who is recognized as the first major performer to assimilate rhythm-and-blues into country music. A recent interview with Bob Montgomery, however, confirmed that in his early days Buddy was primarily attracted to the "pure blues" sung by urban black performers like Lightning Hopkins, Muddy Waters, and Howling Wolf. Buddy listened avidly to the rhythm-and-blues radio station just outside Lubbock. His attraction to rhythm-and-blues coalesced with his immersion in bluegrass and country music. This resulted in the classic "rockabilly" style for which Buddy Holly is famous and from which rock 'n' roll evolved.

The "Buddy and Bob Show" expanded numerically and musically in 1955 to include drummer Jerry Allison, another young Lubbock musician who echoed Buddy's growing appreciation for rock 'n' roll music. Sonny Curtis, a local guitarist, also joined the group. Holly's band performed locally for small fees, and also performed as far away as Dallas and New Mexico.

Buddy Holly, with Joe B. Mauldin (one of the origin Society)

Jim Denny, an agent from Decca Records, saw Buddy perform and offered him a five-year contract with a one year renewal provision. Only one of the Crickets, Sonny Curtis, accompanied Buddy to Nashville. Unfortunately, the entire experience was dismal. Decca wanted a new Elvis, but they were doubtful about Buddy filling the bill. Buddy himself was ill at ease with Decca's studio musicians, who seemed

rickets) on bass (courtesy Buddy Holly Memorial

hostile to the new sound of rock 'n' roll.

When the first year of the contract ended, Decca exercised its option to terminate the contract, so Buddy, Sonny Curtis, and Jerry Allison left Nashville and travelled to Clovis, New Mexico to make "demos" at Norman Petty's studio. After their first two recording sessions, they were joined by Joe B. Mauldin. The close-knit father/son relationship that Buddy formed with Norman Petty continued throughout his brief career. Petty was an organist and pianist with a moderately successful background in composing Broadway and film music. His studio was unique musically as well as geographically. Instead of charging musicians studio time by the hour, he charged by the finished product, which encouraged musicians like Buddy Holly to refine and polish their songs.

Within a year of cutting "That'll Be the Day" at Clovis, the song became a certifiable hit. (Actually, this was the second version; the first had been recorded and released by Decca to mediocre response.) Buddy Holly and the Crickets waited out the year, making several more records at Clovis and practicing together day and night. It was at this time that they concocted the name "The Chirping Crickets," and decided to release their singles under the names of both "Buddy Holly" and "Buddy Holly and the Chirping Crickets" in order to increase their sales. By the end of 1957, with "That'll Be the Day" soaring on the charts, Buddy Holly and the Crickets were on their way.

Single hit records, without the follow-up exposure of tours or television, do not guarantee a successful career in the world of rock music even today, and in the 1950s tours were particularly essential. Television was in its infancy, video tapes of concerts would have seemed as far-fetched as a walk on the moon. Anyone familiar only with the touring practices of current rock stars — who fly in their personal luxury jets to major cities for one-hour concerts at fees of upwards of $500,000 — would be surprised at the conditions characteristic of the late 1950s. Travel was almost exclusively by bus. Shows were often booked on consecutive dates, with several hundred miles of driving between stops. Instead of being booked as the "feature" group or solo artist for their own concerts, musicians of the '50s were booked as part of larger group ventures, with show titles like "The Big Beat," or "The Winter Dance Party,"

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Buddy Holly, with Joe B. Mauldin (one of the original Crickets) on bass (courtesy Buddy Holly Memorial Society)

Jim Denny, an agent from Decca Records, saw Buddy perform and offered him a five-year contract with a one year renewal provision. Only one of the Crickets, Sonny Curtis, accompanied Buddy to Nashville. Unfortunately, the entire experience was dismal. Decca wanted a new Elvis, but they were doubtful about Buddy filling the bill. Buddy himself was ill at ease with Decca's studio musicians, who seemed hostile to the new sound of rock 'n' roll.

When the first year of the contract ended, Decca exercised its option to terminate the contract, so Buddy, Sonny Curtis, and Jerry Allison left Nashville and travelled to Clovis, New Mexico to make "demos" at Norman Petty's studio. After their first two recording sessions, they were joined by Joe B. Mauldin. The close-knit father/son relationship that Buddy formed with Norman Petty continued throughout his brief career. Petty was an organist and pianist with a moderately successful background in composing Broadway and film music. His studio was unique musically as well as geographically. Instead of charging musicians studio time by the hour, he charged by the finished product, which encouraged musicians like Buddy Holly to refine and polish their songs.

Within a year of cutting "That'll Be the Day" at Clovis, the song became a certifiable hit. (Actually, this was the second version; the first had been recorded and released by Decca to mediocre response.) Buddy Holly and the Crickets waited out the year, making several more records at Clovis and practicing together day and night. It was at this time that they concocted the name "The Chirping Crickets," and decided to release their singles under the names of both "Buddy Holly" and "Buddy Holly and the Chirping Crickets" in order to increase their sales. By the end of 1957, with "That'll Be the Day" soaring on the charts, Buddy Holly and the Crickets were on their way.

Single hit records, without the follow-up exposure of tours or television, do not guarantee a successful career in the world of rock music even today, and in the 1950s tours were particularly essential. Television was in its infancy, video tapes of concerts would have seemed as far-fetched as a walk on the moon. Anyone familiar only with the touring practices of current rock stars — who fly in their personal luxury jets to major cities for one-hour concerts at fees of upwards of $500,000 — would be surprised at the conditions characteristic of the late 1950s. Travel was almost exclusively by bus. Shows were often booked on consecutive dates, with several hundred miles of driving between stops. Instead of being booked as the "feature" group or solo artist for their own concerts, musicians of the '50s were booked as part of larger group ventures, with show titles like "The Big Beat," or "The Winter Dance Party,"

or simply, as in the case of a concert sponsored by the General Artists Corporation, "The GAC Show." Fees paid to performers were small to moderate. Reputedly, Buddy Holly never received more than a thousand dollars for a single performance; his customary fee when he performed with the Crickets was $400, and the fee was split three or four ways.

Nonetheless, Holly and the Crickets toured extensively. The royalties they received from their records went to their manager, studio owner Norman Petty. Petty's fatherly concern for the four young men just out of their teens led him to dole out their money to them in small amounts, to avoid extravagance. One way to circumvent Petty's money management was to book the tours.

Newspaper advertisement for a Holly concert in Iowa (courtesy George Horton)

But the most important motivation for touring was the public exposure and experience of performing live. As early as 1956, when he was under contract to Decca, Buddy made arrangements to join two different package tours travelling outside Nashville. His next tour came after he and the Crickets signed with Brunswick and Coral Records in March 1957. That fall the group was signed by the General Artists Corporation for an eighty-day cross-country tour called "The Biggest Show of Stars for 1957." The show included the Everly Brothers, but was centered around such black stars as Fats Domino, Chuck Berry, and Frankie Lymon. The Crickets played two or three of their tunes each night in all but four of the fifty states, including Iowa, on this tour. The price of admission was generally from two to three dollars.

In December 1957 Buddy Holly and the Crickets made their first television appearance on the Ed Sullivan Show, performing their second major hit song, "Peggy Sue." They were featured again just two months later, but a series of mishaps and misunderstandings during the show made the group resistant to subsequent television engagements. Early in 1958 they accepted a five-day Australian tour, with a stopover in Hawaii, on which they were accompanied by Jerry Lee Lewis and Paul Anka. Their teenaged audiences were wildly receptive, though the adult critics were less enthusiastic. One Hawaiian reviewer who was surprised at the energetic audience response commented, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, "We were listening very attentively, but that availed us of little reason to be complimentary."

Buddy and the Crickets accepted a four-week British package tour at the end of the Australian tour, and this time the group was well-received by the critics. They especially praised the Crickets' in-person sound as being nearly parallel in quality to that of their records.

But the Midwest tours brought Buddy Holly

Iowa teenagers rock 'n' roll in the 1950s (SHSI)

Newspaper ad for Holly's last concert (courtesy George Horton)

and the Crickets their most enraptured reception. The response of the audience led promoters in the 1950s to describe the Midwest, according to John Goldrosen, as "prime territory for rock 'n' roll stage shows. Even the small Midwestern towns of 25,000 to 100,000 had large ballrooms which were usually filled by crowds wholly out of proportion to the size of the local population." Among the midwestern stops, Iowa towns stood out for both attendance and enthusiasm. As early as November 4, 1957 Buddy Holly and the Crickets performed in Omaha and Council Bluffs. They returned on April 20, 1958 and began their most extensive Midwest tour, playing twice in Waterloo at the Electric Park Ballroom and then performing at Decorah's Matters Ballroom and Oelwein's National Guard Armory during the summer.

"The Big Beat Tour," an Alan Freed-sponsored show that featured Buddy Holly, the Crickets, Jerry Lee Lewis, and other stars in a two-and-a-half-hour performance, was vividly described the following day by a staff writer for the Waterloo *Courier:*

> *Jerry Lee Lewis didn't show up . . . but the 4,200 rock 'n' roll fans attending didn't care, because the rest of the troupe made enough noise to make up for him . . . Dickey Doo and the Don'ts did a good job on the stage, and Dickey himself didn't do badly behind the stage, either. He clobbered some over-anxious spectator on the jaw earlier in the evening. An incident of hair-pulling, lots of dancing in the aisles and other shenanigans were reported, but no one was hurt.*

The article illustrates a classic split over rock 'n' roll music that existed between adults and teenagers throughout the country. George Horton, a Buddy Holly fan from Conesville, Iowa and a teenager in the 1950s, describes the appeal of early rock 'n' roll music, especially that of Buddy Holly:

> *The 1950s was the first generation of teenagers who had their own music. Since many of our mothers had worked during the war, we grew up more independent. Rock 'n' roll music was rebellious; it said something to us as teenagers. Buddy Holly's songs were clean and crisp; they reached into the audience. As a performer, Buddy could levitate kids out of their seats!*

Iowa teenagers, whose severe Mohawk haircuts, sweat socks, and tennis shoes created a '50s look for their age group, gravitated to the new music they could call their own. But it was the new buying power of teenagers that captivated the record industry.

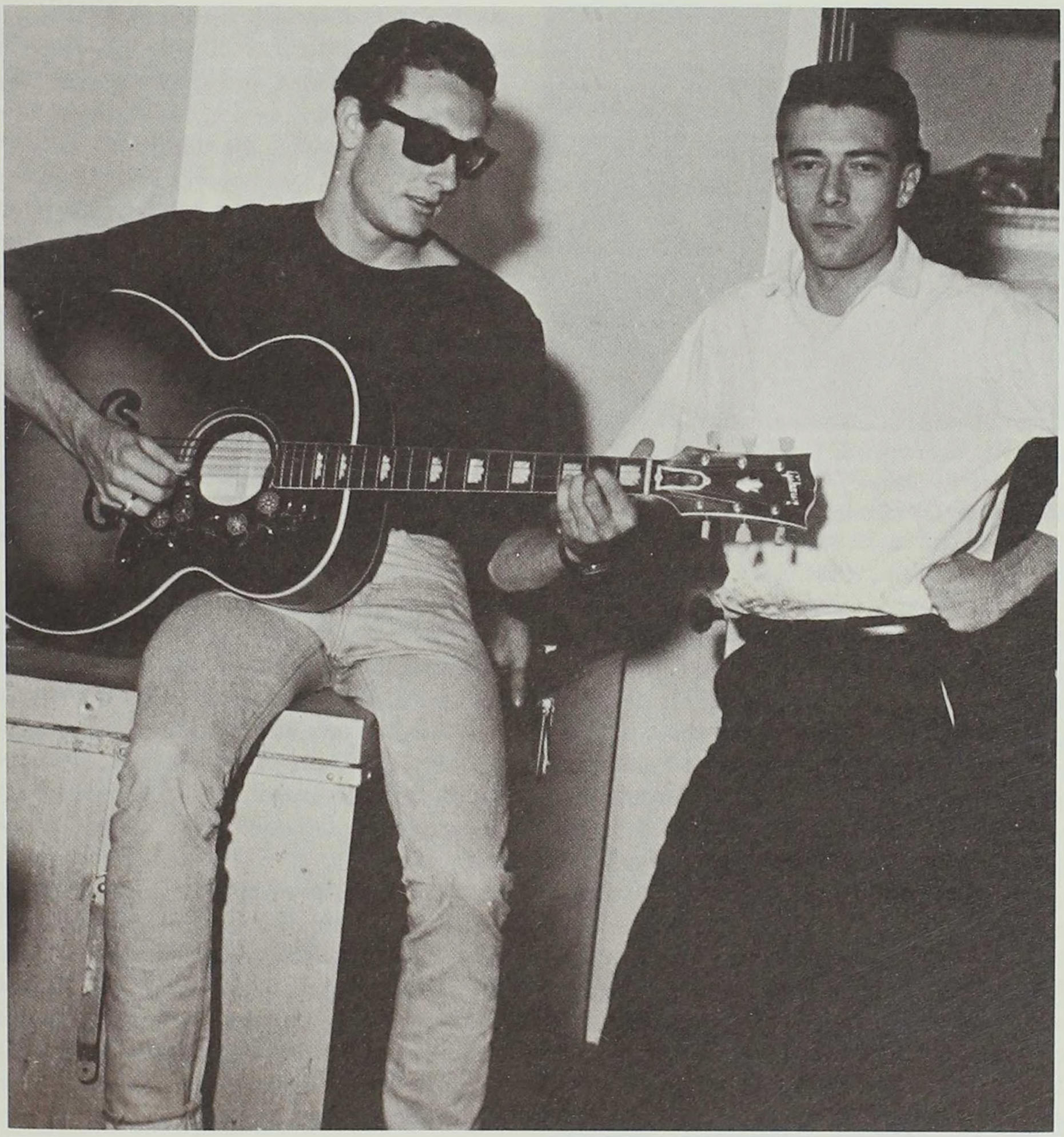
Don Bell was a prominent disk jockey for KRNT, a middle-of-the-road radio station in Des Moines, when he decided to take a vacation in California to investigate the new rock 'n' roll music. Music promoters convinced him that national record sales showed a strong trend toward rock 'n' roll. "It was business, pure business," Bell claimed, "that convinced me to bring rock 'n' roll to Iowa." KRNT apparently didn't adapt well to the new music, so Bell moved over to KIOA in Des Moines, a Top-40 station where he became "the voice of rock 'n' roll." Iowa listeners confirm the ascendancy of KIOA. Teenagers listened to KIOA's continuous rock 'n' roll music in their cars for hours on end. "Cruising" or "doing the ones" (driving down one-way streets with radios blaring) became the archetypal teenage activity of the 1950s.

A series of articles that appeared in the Waterloo *Courier* in February 1959 described the "Revolution in Music." The initial article established, to no one's great surprise, that teenagers "dominated popular music. Conventional artists like Pat Boone and Cole Porter are hurt by the revolution." The third article sharply criticized teenagers' taste in music: "Kids will learn to like bad music if they hear it long enough." One disk jockey, who was interviewed for the article, asked rhetorically, "When will the kids' taste in music get better? When we make this a better world for them to live in."

The controversy over rock 'n' roll was heightened by the new label of "teenager." This demarcation facilitated an unprecedented scrutiny of young people by the media. Following the highly publicized murders by nineteen-year-old Charles Starkweather and his fourteen-year-old girlfriend, editorials from newspapers such as the Des Moines *Register* called for curfews on juveniles. "Teenager" became synonymous with "juvenile delinquent." Movies of the 1950s — such as "The Cool and the Crazy," billed as "seven savage punks on a weekend of violence" — capitalized on adult fears, even as they provided a certain sought-after identity for teenagers.

It was easy to make the tie-in to rock 'n' roll music. Teenagers responded to their new music with thunderous enthusiasm. Joe B. Mauldin, one of the original Crickets who toured the Midwest with Buddy Holly, described the response of their audience during a typical tour stop: "I was lucky to be miked. Without a mike, the sound of my bass would never have been heard over all the screaming and yelling."

A less typical live performance of Alan Freed's "Big Beat Rock 'n' Roll Show," given in



Buddy Holly, with guitar, and Waterloo bandleader Eddie Randall backstage at the Electric Park Ballroom (courtesy Eddie Randall)

Boston on May 3, 1958, was subsequently reported as a "rock 'n' riot." During the performance several minor incidents occurred, involving eager fans who tried to climb onto the stage. Afterwards, outside the Boston Arena, several persons were reported to have been "stabbed, slugged, beaten or robbed by berserk gangs of teenaged boys and girls."

The ensuing storm of protest increased the number and intensity of newspaper editorials critical of teenagers, but this time the young people spoke out in their own defense. In an

Iowa teenagers from Columbus Junction High School were expelled for their Mohawk haircuts in 1959. (courtesy George Horton)

editorial reply to the Waterloo *Courier* on May 12, 1958, local teenagers queried:

> *We would like to know how a certain kind of music can make a person stab another human being. It's unfair to blame the music. Our favorites, like Rick Nelson, Paul Anka and countless others, are clean and offer a decent type of entertainment.*

Although he did not make these teenagers' list, Buddy Holly received a better rating than rock 'n' rollers like Jerry Lee Lewis — whose chaotic on-stage performance was only surpassed by the public's hysterical response to his marriage to his fourteen-year-old cousin. By contrast, Buddy was gentlemanly. His glasses, which were incongruous at the time for any stage performer, created a subsequent fad for on-stage spectacles and gave him a certain aura of clean-cut respectability. Norman Petty, his manager, persuaded Buddy and the Crickets (who favored jeans off-stage) to wear suits when they toured. Waterloo bandleader Eddie Randall, of Eddie and the Downbeats, opened the July 8, 1958 performance of Buddy Holly and the Crickets at the Electric Park Ballroom. He remembers Buddy Holly as a "quiet individual, very honest and sincere," and "never without a tie."

Buddy's music was not immune to criticism. One of his songs, "Rave On," a sweet, self-mocking little love song, was labeled by an anti-rock 'n' roll radio station as "music to steal hubcaps by." Fortunately, Iowa teenagers found other reasons to appreciate Buddy's music. Eddie Randall confirms that Buddy's Iowa appearances "always had a packed house." Jim Dalton, currently a disk jockey for WMT in Cedar Rapids, attended one of Buddy's midwestern performances and admits to being

> *mesmerized by his appearance. He was not a showman, per se. He was not flamboyant, but he sang from his heart. He had charisma. He had the audience jumping up and down for his up-beat tunes and sitting in rapt silence for his moody love songs.*

Dalton's remarks are echoed by several people who attended the ill-fated last concert in Clear Lake, Iowa on February 2, 1959. Carroll Anderson, then manager of the Surf Ballroom in Clear Lake, remembered trying to make Holly and the other members of the multi-act "Winter Dance Party" feel at home. He was particularly sympathetic to the musicians as travellers whose one-night stops were separated by several hundred miles of driving. The disk jockey for the Surf Ballroom that night was Bob Hale, who recalled that Buddy's last performance was attended by "the largest crowd ever at the Surf." Daniel Dougherty, one of the 1500 rock 'n' roll fans who paid the $1.25 admission to see the "Winter Dance Party," remembered that "there was not too much dancing while Buddy was playing."

The Clear Lake concert was wedged between two performances on February 1 in Appleton and Green Bay, Wisconsin and a performance scheduled for February 3 in Moorhead, Minnesota, 430 miles to the west. Repeated mechanical breakdowns of the bus, including its heating system, and a suitcase full of costumes that needed to be cleaned before the concert in Moorhead, prompted Buddy Holly and two other musicians on the tour (Ritchie Valens and J.P. Richardson) to charter a private plane. All four occupants of the plane were killed instantly when it crashed about ten minutes after taking off from the tiny airfield. The crash was attributed to severe cold, snow, and perhaps pilot error.

Nearly every Iowa newspaper carried the story of the plane crash as its front-page headline, but instead of sending one of their own reporters to write an individual report, most papers chose to use the available UPI story. Although the use of wire stories is hardly unusual, such a decision may have reflected a lack of knowledge of or interest in the rock 'n' roll music of Buddy Holly. Only the Clear Lake *Mirror-Reporter* provided a personal angle and a certain affirmation of the musicians and their audience at the Surf Ballroom:

> *There was no fearful omen of tragedy [during this last performance]. The entertainers were full of pep, reacting joyously to the big crowd of young people.*

Four years ago, Iowa fans initiated an annual memorial concert at Clear Lake's Surf Ballroom on the first weekend in February. Each year the number of people attending increases. *Reminiscing* (the Journal of the Buddy Holly Memorial Society) links Iowa fans with his many fans throughout the nation, and to the British Buddy Holly Society as well. *The Buddy Holly Story*, the 1975 movie starring Gary Busey, appears to have crystalized the feelings of isolated fans of Buddy and his music into a movement that credits him with originating rock 'n' roll. Iowans like Jim Dalton insist that most people who grew up on Buddy's music have always expressed their appreciation strongly. "His music grabbed us," Dalton maintains. "It still does. You can tell he had fun with his music, and we do, too."

More than twenty years after his tragic death at the age of twenty-two, Buddy Holly is the distillation of contradictions. He was a young man whose thick glasses and conservative suit belied the exuberance and irony of his unusual voice. His songwriting is staggeringly prolific in view of his age. His willingness to experiment and enlarge upon his own experiences is astonishing. (At his death, for example, plans were discovered to produce an album of Ray Charles songs and to delve more deeply into the Spanish music his wife introduced him to.) Juxtaposed with such rock 'n' roll originals as Chuck Berry and Jerry Lee Lewis, Buddy Holly carved out a unique niche in rock 'n' roll history. His music and the devotion of his fans assure his immortality. □

Note on Sources

The following published works were used in the preparation of this article: John Goldrosen, *Buddy Holly: His Life and Music* (Bowling Green, O.: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1975); Dave Laing, *Buddy Holly* (New York: Macmillan, 1971); *Lillian Roxon's Rock Encyclopedia* (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1971); Arnold Shaw, *The Rockin' '50s: The Decade That Transformed the Pop Music Scene* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1974); "An Exclusive 'Reminiscing' Interview with Eddie Randall," *Reminiscing: The Official Journal of the Buddy Holly Memorial Society*, No. 22 (March 1982), 15-17; and William J. Bush, "Buddy Holly: The Legend and Legacy," *Guitar Player*, June 1982, pp. 64-66, 74-82, 86. Research materials for the article also included personal interviews with Don Bell, Jim Dalton, George Horton, and Eddie Randall, and a collection of Buddy Holly memorabilia in the possession of George Horton.

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